

MP Special Reaction

Exercise inc

BY THOM WILLIAMS
SCOUT STAFF

The 18th MP Detachment Reaction Team was activated and responded to a hostage situation at a family housing during a recent exercise in the Pershing Housing Area.

The exercise brought together law enforcement officials from Huachuca, Sierra Vista and Cochise County.

According to the exercise scenario, the Fort Huachuca Military Police Station was notified by the Cochise County Sheriff's Office of a possible felony suspect staying at a house in Huachuca.

As the incident evolved, the two suspects took a hostage and barricaded themselves in quarters for demolition at 111 Stanley Street.

Once on location and after identifying a mission, team members planned and practiced their coordinated action.

The SRT was instructed to enter the quarters where the suspect

Photos by
Thom Williams

Middle, Sgt. Tom Abruzzo (center), team leader, draws up a plan to enter a house in Pershing Plaza as Special Reaction Team members Sgt. D.J. Hughes (right), assistant team leader and Sgt. Joseph Alley (left) look on.

Below left, Paramedics from the Fort Huachuca Fire Department give a medical check to a Cochise County Sheriff who played the role of suspect in the Special Reaction Team hostage exercise.

Right, Military Police Special Reaction Team members await the "go" signal prior to entering the quarters at 111 Stanley Street on Fort Huachuca during a recent hostage-rescue exercise in Pershing Plaza Housing Area. The Soldiers from the 18th Military Police Detachment rehearse an approach to a house where suspects are in an armed standoff with MPs during a recent exercise in the Pershing Plaza section of Fort Huachuca. Fort Huachuca paramedics work with .



on Team Exercise

cludes local law enforcement officials

located.

The SRT mission was to provide security and safely secure the hostage should they be released, or if necessary, through force, secure the release of the hostage.

The SRT trains more than 16 hours a month and can be used in a variety of situations.

"They can perform any mission for the incident or the garrison commander, from a bank robbery to a barricaded subject," said 1st Sgt. Thomas Ransford, 18th MP Detachment.

SRT members are all Military Police from the detachment who volunteer to join the team, which serves a similar role as a civilian SWAT team.

Members of the SRT attend a three-week course at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. that teaches the Soldiers the basics skills required to be a team member. Some Soldiers receive advanced military training, while others go to civilian schools.

"They are all very similar techniques," said Ransford. "It's just more opportunities to train with another outside eye better able to give you an evaluation from an outside

perspective on what you did wrong and how you can improve in the future."

This hostage exercise was designed to evaluate skills of the members of the SRT.

Observers from the Sierra Vista Police Department and the Cochise County Sheriff's Office were on hand to lend their expertise to the training.

"We have an excellent working relationship," said Ransford. "They provided support in the aspect of role players and also provided evaluators who were able to tell us where we were doing right and wrong."

The hostage situation ended with the safe release of the captive, and the suspects were apprehended.

The group of player and evaluators then huddled near the Directorate of Emergency Services Emergency Operations Center for an after action-review.

"Going through and actually feeling the paint ball hit you makes you learn to not make the same mistake twice. You can't do that with a book," Ransford added.



Above, 18th Military Police Detachment SRT members Sgt. D.J. Hughes (right) and Sgt. Tom Abruzzo ensure a room is clear of threats during a recent hostage rescue exercise in quarters slated for demolition in Pershing Plaza.

Below, Sgt Eliseo Rivera leads the way down a hallway at 111 Stanley Street in the Pershing Plaza Housing Area during a hostage rescue exercise.

